/133/

793 The Cururu then, before the total flood, went into the ground, carrying burning embers in his mouth, and there, by blowing on them, he did not let them go out. When he found out that the liquid element had disappeared from the face of the earth, he once again took into his mouth the embers of fire, came out into the open air, sought out the two children, delivered the fire to them, and thus they were able to cook the fish which they were patiently extracting from the fresh water, and thus they were able to give warmth to their shivering members (1).

● [538] [825] 1. When children bother a toad, it will puff itself up to remind them that by blowing it did not let the fire go out, reminding them that they owe it gratitude. This is what the very old people tell the children.

The two children grew older until they were old enough to propagate, which in fact they did until the Chiriguano had again multiplied, all of whom, according to them, descended from those two beings.

This story, as I said, clearly manifests, with very slight differences, the idea of the universal flood, of Noah's ark, and of the human race which was saved in it. At the same time it demonstrates the ill will of Aguara-Tunpa against God and His creatures, and the new multiplication of the race on the banks of a river.

796 173 792 The primary divinities, one completely good and the other good and bad, depending on his will, are only two, but tradition and relatively contemporary history teach us that in different times and in various regions some daring Indian who was fond of laziness and other people's property, with a degree of loquacity and extraordinary promises, managed to gather around him in his new house, which he had deliberately built outside the town, a multitude of Indians from near and far and claimed to be Tunpa, an extraordinary and marvelous being. Others, including a certain woman of great daring, have claimed to be Tunpa ichi, "mother of God," which had little effect, and on other occasions,

Ee 834 171

/221 cont./

K. v. d. Steinen (1) and Koch-Grünberg (2) have pointed

1. K. v. d. Steinen: op. cit., p. 25.

2. Koch-Grünberg: op. cit., Vol. I, p. 133 /Zwei Jahre unter den Indianern (Two Years among the Indians), Berlin, 1909/.

Ee [113]

out that even the women among the Indians on the Xingu and Rio Negro speak of sexual parts quite openly, as of something natural. The same is true among the Indians with whom I became acquainted. When I inquired about words touching on the most intimate things, even the women, indeed, the young girls, answered in the most natural manner.

Ee [124]

There are words, however, which are prohibited. Such words among the Choroti are "ametché," which is an abusive word, "ictivähi," which designates homosexual intercourse, "huéle," which means onanism, and "tévi" among the Chané /222/ and Chiriguano, which has the same meaning as ictivähi. Here, too, the unnatural in sexual life is so shameful that it is not proper to speak of it.

Ce 195 834 838

c 834 838

There are also Indians who never want to speak about such things. This was true, for example, of a Chiriguano whom I had with me on my first trip on the Rio Parapiti. He even pretended that he had never heard such things mentioned. When I asked him about homosexuality among his countrymen, he feigned stupidity and said more or less: "Is that what the whites do?"

c [124]

Ce 538 831 [551]

Ce [115]

c [538] [831]

Among the Indians, as among ourselves, there are nevertheless some who take pleasure in telling obscene stories. Such a one was the old Chané Bóyra, he who had the abusive name yúruhuasu, big-mouth. The more disagreeable the things he related, the more old Bóyra enjoyed himself. Sometimes he told such things that even my friend Batirayu, who used to interpret, was quite embarrassed. The old Chiriguano Yambási was also one who could tell all kinds of obscene stories.

/234/

Chapter Fifteen

Drinking Bouts among the Chané and Chiriguano

Ee 178 527 273 538 [805]

If a Chané or Chiriguano tells a legend, he often begins it thus: "A long time ago there was once a great drinking bout." If he reports something that happened, some illness of a relative or the like, he will say: "It was before or after the festival." Indeed, at these festivals one hears and sees most of what has remained of the old culture of these Indians. This is when the most beautiful clay vessels appear, this is when one sees costumes from olden times, this is when the stone ornaments are taken out of the treasure jars.

Ee 273 415 527 531

Among us a housewife is proud if she can show her guests beautiful tablecloths and fine porcelain. The Chané and Chiriguano women think the same way. At festivals each woman wants the maize beer at her house to be brought out in clay vessels more beautiful than those of her neighbors and to be served in calabashes that are more elegantly decorated than those of anyone else.

Ee 531 [527] [323] [462]

That is why, before each festival, the women are occupied with making clay vessels and the men with the decoration of calabashes. In the Chané and Chiriguano villages one sees magnificent collections of clay vessels. A few women in particular know how to paint these with superior skill and elegance. One almost never sees three jugs that are entirely alike. Each one tries to appear at the festival with something original, to paint something new and pretty. As far as linear /235/ ornamentation is concerned, they know how to vary the old ornamentation, but they do not know how or do not want to free themselves from them and open up new paths. The /Fig. 116 appears here/ Indian woman is conservative in her art and is able /236/ to free herself from the models of her mother's or grandmother's time only if she takes her motifs directly from nature and paints animals. By no means all the women in the villages are artists. There are some whom nature has endowed with the gift of art, and some true bunglers. Who can paint clay vessels as one of the wives of

Ee [181]

ooo

6: Nordenskiöld--101 E-5 (1908-1909) 1912 SF10 Chiriguano SF10
Chané SF8

/250/

Chapter Seventeen

On the Life of the Chané and Chiriguano Indians (Continuation)

Legend and Religion

Once there was an old Indian who used to sit beside the fire in his hut in the evening and tell about olden days, about animals, human beings, and spirits. The young people gathered around him, listening. The old man went on and on telling stories. He told them with his mouth, eyes, hands, and feet.

One young person after another, however, soon left the circle of listeners and lay down to sleep. Finally the old man was sitting alone beside the dying fire and talking to himself about the adventures of the fox-god and the armadillo-god.

To me this old man represents the old traditions, a culture that is disappearing. The young people listen for a while, but it is soon too much for them. They have new interests. They have begun dancing the great dance which the Christians call civilization, where the dancing is usually around the golden calf.

I also sat there as a listener and had the legends explained to me. I believe the old people liked me because I showed such great interest in their old recollections. If I now retell them, I hope the reader will be lenient with me and my old friends, with me because I cannot tell a story as well as the old people, and with the old people because they love everything that is a bit frivolous.

/251/ The legends give us insight into the Indians' ideas of the life beyond and of the spirits. In part through them and in part through the explanations which the Indians have given me, we can understand their religion. We shall hear about the destruction of the world and the theft of fire, about the visit in the realm of the dead, and, above all, about the adventures of the spirits; we shall hear how they deceived one another and human beings, hear of their combats and their vices.

Ce /251 cont./

538 There is very little moral teaching in these legends. The characters in them are often "tunpa," that is, they have supernatural power, that is all.

Ce [177] As a result of contact with the whites, the legends are not free of foreign elements. Most of them, however, are purely Indian.

Ce 539 1. The Destruction of the World and the Theft of Fire.

Ce [115] Told by the Chané Indian Batirayu from the Rio Parapiti.

In the old days there was once a very poor man who wandered about in the forests and had no permanent residence. When he came into the villages, he was driven away and the dogs sicked on him. When the man saw that he was not wanted in any village, he made himself a hut, "tocay" (1). All kinds of beautiful birds

Ce [343] [223] 1. Tocay is a hut in which a hunter hides in order to catch birds from there with a snare or arrow.

came to the hut, and most of them soon became so tame that he could catch them. The man thought: "If I go to a village with these magnificent birds, perhaps I shall be accepted." So he took the birds and went into the villages. Everybody thought the birds were beautiful, but they did not want to let him settle down anywhere. The man went back to his hut. One day Añatunpa (2) came to him in the shape of a beautiful bird. What

Ce [776] 2. The great spirit (see p. 108).

a strange bird that is, thought the man. /252/ Añatunpa said he had come to help him and gave him a pair of wings.

"When you come to a village, you must move the wings and then it will thunder," said Añatunpa. "If they will not let you settle down in spite of this, then lift the wings."

Ce 692 643 68

/89 cont./
of the deceased (359).

359. Nord. 1, p. 231.

C 421

Private property is highly respected among the Chiriguano. According to Métraux, even the closest relatives cannot make use of the property of one of them without his consent. The

C 423

possession of a piece of land is guaranteed to a Chiriguano by planting any plant on it or by clearing the circumference of the land required and making large slashes in the trees. When he selects a plot for his planting, the Chiriguano examines it carefully to determine that there are no traces of a previous planting (360).

360. Métraux I, pp. 334 and 340.

C 241 476 [622]

After the land selected for the planting has been cleared, relatives and friends are called together to help with the work. Formerly, the cacique of the town also took part by keeping watch for the workers (361).

361. Métraux I, p. 337.

/90/

Religion

C Ce 797 991 198 538

In their many years of activity the missions have naturally influenced notably the religious notions of the Chiriguano and Chané. Most of them today are Christians. Some still retain part of their primordial ideas, expressed in their legends. I shall limit myself here to referring the reader again to the Chané legends taken down by Nordenskiöld (362) and mentioned several times in the preceding.

362. Nord. 1, pp. 251-296.